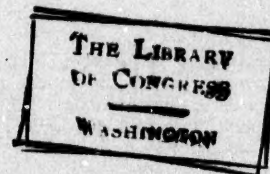


JUNIOR SOCIETIES  
OF  
CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

BY REV. F. E. CLARK.  
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## Junior Societies of Christian Endeavor.

BY REV. F. E. CLARK.

The demand for Junior Societies has been as spontaneous as it is pressing. Many pastors and churches have felt that, while the regular Society of Christian Endeavor was admirably answering the needs of the young men and women and of the older boys and girls, yet the younger ones, who could not attend the regular weekly prayer-meeting held in the evening, were, in some degree, left out of the plan. In many places this lack has been supplied by the introduction of Junior Societies of Christian Endeavor into which the little children are taken, and from which they are graduated when old enough into the regular Society. The suggestions here given have come to me very largely from others who have successfully tried these plans.

### WHO SHOULD BELONG?

Various answers are given to this question, I notice, in the sample constitutions which I have before me. One constitution says children from eight to sixteen,

Another says from eight to fourteen. I should be inclined to adopt the younger age, and, perhaps, put it even one year earlier—say, children from seven to thirteen. Still, it is difficult to draw any age limit, and, perhaps, it is not necessary. The age line is drawn largely by the necessities of the case.

The call for Junior Societies comes from the fact that there are many children who ought to be brought under direct religious influence whose parents will not, and ought not, to allow them to go out in the evening, when the meetings of the regular society are necessarily held. For them, meetings should be appointed in the afternoon, or, at least, in the early evening. It is also true that these younger children, while there are many things in their society which they can do for themselves, are not quite old enough to carry on their organization fully. They particularly need the guidance of the pastor and older members. This brings us to the question:

#### WHO SHOULD BE AT THE HEAD OF THE JUNIOR SOCIETY?

Some one or two of the older and more judicious young people, I should say; but be sure that they have a great love for children in their hearts. In this respect I particularly like the constitution of the Junior Society of the First Presbyterian Church of Grand Rapids, Mich. It says, as you will see on another page, "The officers of the society shall be a superintendent, assistant superintendent, secretary and treasurer. There shall also be a Lookout Committee, and such other committees as may be needed." . . . "The superintendent and assistant shall be appointed by the pastor, subject to the approval of the officers of the church. The secretary and treasurer shall be elected by the society. The

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Lookout Committee shall be appointed by the superintendent and assistant."

#### ITS RELATION TO THE OLDER SOCIETY.

This relation should be close and intimate. The older young people should take an affectionate interest in their juniors, and the younger ones will, doubtless, look forward to becoming members of the older organization as soon as their increasing years allow. In the constitution of the Hanover Street Society, of Manchester, N. H., is a clause wisely worded and related to this subject, which reads as follows:

"The Junior Society, being a part of and in closest relation to the Christian Endeavor Society, may expect that the latter will do all in its power to aid and support it; and it is expected that, when the members of the Junior Society have reached their age limit, they shall enter the Christian Endeavor Society as active members."

#### WHAT PLEDGES SHOULD THEY MAKE?

As much like the pledge of the other society as their years will allow. I do not think it is too much to ask of even the boys and girls of seven or eight to pray and read the Bible each day, to try and lead Christian lives, and to show it by being present at the weekly meeting and taking some part therein. As you will see from the following constitution, this is all required in some societies, and I see no objection to it. There are some expressions of the Christian life which are just as appropriate to the boy of eight as to the youth of eighteen or the man of forty-eight, and it is just as important that he should give utterance to these expressions.

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utterly antagonistic to anything of that sort, but there are simple words of confession which are just as appropriate for the little child to use as the more elaborate forms are for his father.

There is no danger of beginning too young. Our older societies will be stronger, and so will our churches, if these little ones begin aright. In churches where there are flourishing Junior as well as Senior Societies of Christian Endeavor, I predict very few "dumb Christians" in twenty years from now.

As all admit, the first part of this pledge is reasonable, that even the boys and girls should read the Bible and pray daily, and try to lead Christian lives.

During the last few years I have met this pledge worded in just this way in a thousand unexpected places. So far as I know, it was first framed by the writer some eight or nine years ago, and used in a "pastor's class" before the Society of Christian Endeavor was thought of. It worked well in that class, and, as I believe, wherever it has been tried.

And now for the conclusion of the whole matter. If, in your Sunday School, there are a number of children who are too young for the regular Society, but not too young to come to Jesus and be trained for Him, consider carefully whether the Junior Society is not the thing for them. Count the cost; remember that it will require work from some one to keep it in a flourishing condition (the difficulty is not in starting, but in sustaining, such a society). Then, if you are convinced that such an auxiliary is what you need, go forward and start a Junior Society for the children, for Christ and the Church.

#### HOW TO START A JUNIOR SOCIETY.

The following suggestion in regard to starting a Junior



Society came from the church which also furnishes us with our Model Constitution:

"On Sunday, a meeting of the children was called at 5 o'clock P. M., in the lecture-room, for the purpose of organizing a Junior Society of Christian Endeavor. A number of children, between the ages of eight and fourteen, were present. The pastor explained to them the object and plans of the society, and especially the meaning of the pledge, and, after prayer, asked how many were willing to be members of such a society. Seven expressed a wish to do so, some not being ready to take the step. These seven were then organized into a society, and a superintendent and assistant superintendent were appointed."

We give below the constitution of the society.

#### A MODEL JUNIOR CONSTITUTION.

The following, with a very few verbal changes, is the Constitution of the Junior Society of Christian Endeavor of the First Presbyterian Church, Grand Rapids, Mich., which may well be regarded as a model constitution:

#### CONSTITUTION.

I. This Society shall be called The Junior Society of Christian Endeavor of \_\_\_\_\_

II. Its object shall be to promote an earnest Christian life among the boys and girls who shall become members, and prepare them for the active service of Christ.

III. Any boy or girl between the ages of seven and thirteen inclusive, who shall be approved by the Superintendent and Assistant, may become a member of the Society by taking the following pledge:

"Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for strength, I promise Him that I will try to do whatever He would

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like to have me do ; that I will pray to Him every day ;  
and that just so far as I know how, I will try to lead a  
Christian life. I will be present at every meeting of the  
Society when I can, and will take some part in every  
meeting."

IV. The officers of the Society shall be a Superin-  
tendent, Assistant Superintendent, Secretary and Treas-  
urer. There shall also be a Lookout Committee, and  
such other committees as may be needed.

V. The Superintendent and Assistant shall have  
charge of the work of the Society.

The Secretary shall keep a record of the names of the  
members, and the minutes of the business-meetings.

The Treasurer shall safely keep all money belonging  
to the Society, and pay it out only as directed by the  
Society.

The Lookout Committee shall bring new members  
into the Society, and affectionately look after and reclaim  
any who seem indifferent to their pledge.

VI. The Superintendent and Assistant shall be  
appointed by the Pastor, subject to the approval of the  
Church. The Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected  
by the Society. The Lookout Committee shall be  
appointed by the Superintendent and Assistant. All  
officers shall be chosen once in six months.

VII. A prayer-meeting shall be held once every week.  
A consecration-meeting shall be held once a month, at  
which the pledge shall be read, and the roll called, and  
the responses of the members shall be considered a  
renewal of the pledge of the Society. If any member  
shall be absent from three consecration-meetings without  
excuse, his name shall be dropped from the list of  
members.

VIII. Part of the hour of the weekly meeting shall, if

deemed best, be used by the Pastor or Superintendent of the Society for instruction, or for other exercises which they may approve.

**BY-LAWS.**

I. The Society shall hold the prayer-meeting on \_\_\_\_\_ afternoon of each week. The last regular meeting of each month shall be the consecration-meeting.

II. The officers and committees shall be chosen in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and continue six months, beginning on the first of the month following their election.

III. Special meetings of the Society may be held at any time, at the call of the Superintendent.

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